

The Methodist Protestant Faith

The Official Publication of the Methodist Protestant Church

Providing Bible-Based, Christ-Centered, Holiness Material.

Volume LXII/Number 3

March 2008



**Like as Christ was raised up from the dead . . .
we also should walk in newness of life.**

Romans 6:4

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The Methodist Protestant Church
Organized 1828

Our Motto . . .

Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Jude 3

We Believe . . .

. . . That God created the Heavens and the Earth

. . . That the Bible is the inspired, infallible, and inerrant "Word of God"

. . . That Jesus Christ is the Virgin-born Son of God

. . . In the divine nature of Jesus Christ

. . . In the atoning blood of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins

. . . In Sanctification as a second definite work of grace

. . . That believers may know the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit

. . . In the bodily Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ

. . . In the soon return of Jesus Christ in power and great glory

. . . In an actual heaven, the reward for the saints, and an actual hell, a place of eternal punishment for the wicked

. . . In the sanctity of life

. . . In holy matrimony between man and woman

President's Message -

Rev. LaDon Dawson, General Conference President

Looking around, we see signs of new life beginning to take shape as trees are budding out. New Life! What a wonderful thought as Easter approaches and we are reminded of new life in Jesus. This time of year that we celebrate the exclamation point in history as God completed the redemption of men, when Jesus went to the cross. Although He was crucified and died, He did not stay in the grave, but He rose again on the third day - reminding us that God does all things well. He saves, sanctifies and keeps us safe in His arms. May we truly remember God's exclamation point in History and share Jesus with a world that's looking for answers to the world's woes.

March is a busy month for our denomination. The WMS Convention will be held on March 15. Easter comes around early this year on the 23rd of March. We urge you to remember the Brand Jenkins Memorial Offering this Easter. Give liberally to the support of missions. The General Conference Boards will meet on March 28 and 29. Pray for the work of our church. These good people elected to serve on these boards have been faithful to come and give of themselves to work for God and the Methodist Protestant Church.

You may contact me by calling 601-587-4147, writing to 4 Divide Road, Monticello, MS 39654, email: ladondawson@bellsouth.net or calling General Conference Headquarters 601-765-0029 on Tuesdays - 9 AM-5 PM.

NOTICE! If you would be willing to serve in the kitchen as cook and/or an assistant during the General Conference - May 21-23 - Please call the Headquarters at 601-765-0029. The menus will be preplanned and food on hand - we just need cooks!

PLEASE NOTICE!
Send all articles and correspondence to:
Methodist Protestant Faith
P.O. Box 2454 • Collins, MS 39428
Phone: 601-765-0029 or 601-517-5208
Email: mpfeditor@bellsouth.net
Articles must be received by 20th of month
for next issue or will be held
for the following issue.

Calendar of Events

(Please send information for Revivals, Special Youth Events, Homecomings and any other special dates.)

| | | |
|-----------|------|---|
| Mar 8 | 6 PM | Youth Praise Service Neely MP Church |
| Mar 9 | 2 PM | SE Zone WMS Brotherhood Hickory Grove MP Church |
| Mar 14 | | Youth Overnight Camping Trip Forest Grove MP Church |
| Mar 15 | 9 AM | WMS Convention MP Headquarters, Collins, MS |
| Mar 21 | 7 PM | <i>The Passion</i> film Neely MP Church |
| Mar 22 | 10AM | Egg Hunt/Crawfish Boil Neely MP Church |
| Mar 28-29 | | General Conference Board Meetings MP Headquarters, Collins, MS |
| Mar 29 | 10-3 | MS Youth Retreat (More details next issue) |
| Apr 3 | 7 PM | Youth & Pastor Summit MS Campground |

| | | |
|-----------|---------|---|
| Apr 12 | 9 AM | MS WMS Branch Meeting MS Campground, Collins, MS |
| Apr 13 | 2:30 PM | MS SE Youth Rally Hickory Grove MP Church |
| Apr 19 | 9 AM | AL WMS Branch Meeting Cedar Grove MP Church, Thorsby, AL |
| Apr 26 | 9 AM | LA WMS Branch Meeting Yeager MP Church, West Monroe, LA |
| May 21-23 | | General Conference MP Headquarters, Collins, MS |

Deaths

The following were submitted from Shiloh MP Church, MS.

Hugh Lee Adams - July 2005
 Billy Vance - Sept. 2005
 Glennis Halford - March 2006
 Roy Payne - August 2006
 Doyle McMillon - November 2006
 Effie Fisher - September 2007

(Editor's Note: You may send information about deaths, weddings, and births in your church or family. Obituaries, memorials or tributes - limited to one per deceased - will be included in the May and June issues of the MPF.)

Woman's Missionary Convention

of the Methodist Protestant Church

Saturday, March 15, 2008 at 9:00 A.M.

at the Mississippi Campgrounds, Collins, MS.

Pot luck lunch on Saturday.

The Education Committee, Programs and Findings Committee, and Nominating Committee will be meeting at 6:00 P.M. Friday, March 14. (**Education Committee:** Mrs. Lessie Carmichael, Ms. Ann Fleming, Mrs. Carolyn Jackson, Mrs. Elgie Sellers, and Rev. Martha Headley. **Programs and Findings Committee:** Mrs. Sonda Davis, Mrs. Cindy Lambert, Mrs. Dianne Reid, Mrs. Bonnie Bennett, and Mrs. Darla Hunt. **Nominating Committee:** Mrs. Lessie Carmichael, Mrs. Bonnie Bennett, Mrs. Darla Hunt, Mrs. Reggie Smith, Mrs. Cindy Lambert)

This year we will have a workshop of methods as outlined in the Discipline. Each departmental secretary will have a display explaining their secretarial position. Also, each secretary will give a short talk (no longer than 5 minutes each) explaining their secretarial duties. Since this will be a great learning experience, I would like to encourage everyone to bring at least one lady from their church who has never attended convention before.

TRANSFIGURATION

Matthew 16:37-17, 21-23, 17:1-9
Rev. Harold Jackson

The Scriptures relating to the transfiguration is rather lengthy. Although all are important, I want to highlight this portion, *“and was transfigured before them.”* The background before the scene of the transfiguration started with a couple of questions that Jesus asked the disciples. One question was, *Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?”* The disciples then related to Christ what they had heard people saying about Him. I think it would be a great honor to be equated with John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or another great prophet. But think of the honor that Moses and Elijah must have enjoyed to be counted worthy of discussing the “exodus” of Christ from the earth to glory. They appeared in a glorified state to talk with the Savior, who was transfigured before the disciples. Think how the three disciples must have felt to view such a glorious scene.

The second question posed to the three was, *But whom say ye that I am?* That seems to be a worthy question to ask today. Whom do you think Jesus is? The born again believer can immediately answer, *Thou art the Christ (Messiah)!* Peter spoke rather quickly. This was not always the case with Peter. The experience of walking on the water may have somewhat halted Peter from responding so quickly. Peter so quickly wanted to walk on the water, but his failing faith brought embarrassment to him. But in this case, I visualize Peter responding rather quickly to the question. Peter had the right answer and was complimented by Jesus for having received it from the Father. With that response from the Messiah of God, Peter

received some honor from the other disciples.

The next response by Peter did not bring him any credit. When Christ spoke of being put to death, Peter could not bear the thought of it. *Lord, this shall not be unto Thee.* Jesus said, *Get thee behind Me, Satan, thou art an offense unto Me...* Jesus informed Peter as where the first declaration came from; *But my Father which is in heaven...* Many have thought that Jesus was calling Peter the devil, but I think not, but rather that Christ was informing Peter of the source of his rebuke. Neither statement had its source in Peter. What Peter said violated the plan of redemption that was drawn up even before the world was created. This statement from Christ implies that Satan did not want Jesus to go to the cross, because in doing so, Jesus brought forth the Way that men, women and children may be saved. The declaration of Christ that He was going to die surely brought sadness to the disciples. They remembered the miracles of Christ that indicated that Jesus came from God, and that He was who He claimed to be. Now, the Miracle-worker is going to die, was more than the disciples could understand. Their evaluation of it was *Be it far from Thee...* Peter was almost placing himself in the place of Satan, because he was opposing the plan for redemption by wanting to prevent Christ from death. In order to get this all arranged in their minds, God did a wonderful miracle before them that gave support and strength to the disciples faith, and to demonstrate the importance of the cross.

Mark relates that it was *after six days* the transfiguration of Christ took

place. Luke says that it was *after 8 days* that it happened. Why the contradiction? There is no contradiction in those verses. It was six days after the conversation about who men say that Christ is. It was after eight days, including the conversation, when we read of the transfiguration. As the disciples were thinking upon the announcement of death, they could not help but remember some events of the past near 3 years, especially those events that involved death.

Jesus raised the young man, the only son of a distraught mother, a widow at Nain. He simply touched the casket and said, *Young man, I say unto thee, arise.* In the house of Jairus, Christ was Master over death. He spoke with living love, *Little lamb, I say unto thee, arise.* There was no thunder in His voice. He did not yell at death, as “so-called faith healers” of today yell at the sick and command that they be healed. Christ stood there as Master over death. There were numerous cases of healing by the Lord before the Transfiguration. No doubt these cases were going through the minds of the disciples after Christ announced His death.

How could they reconcile the death of Christ after all the great miracles that were performed in their presence? There was no way the human mind could conceive it all. Only God could bring it together to their understanding.

What was the purpose of the Transfiguration? Was it to confirm Jesus’ faith in the Father Almighty?

(Continued on page 5)

The Resurrection of Christ

Rev. John W. Gerald

STRONG'S DEFINITION OF EASTER

pascha {pas'-khah} Passover, Easter

1) The paschal sacrifice (which was accustomed to be offered for the people's deliverance of old from Egypt)

2) The paschal lamb, i.e. the lamb the Israelites were accustomed to slay and eat on the fourteenth day of the month of Nisan (the first month of their year) in memory of the day on which their fathers, preparing to depart from Egypt, were bidden by God to slay and eat a lamb, and to sprinkle their door posts with its blood, that the destroying angel, seeing the blood, might pass over their dwellings; Christ crucified is likened to the slain paschal lamb.

I. THE ONLY REFERENCE TO EASTER IN SCRIPTURE

Acts 12:4 *And when he had apprehended him, he put [him] in prison, and delivered [him] to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.*

Easter - the celebration of passover for the Jews! Herod could not bring Peter to court on a holy day, or he would stir up too great opposition to himself. It was the time of unleavened bread, or the time of the passover.

II. THE ASSOCIATION OF EASTER AND THE RESURRECTION

Pagan Rome also had some form of celebration for the vernal equinox they called Easter. Which of these the Roman Catholic church adopted, it may be hard to determine. They adopted many of the pagan holidays which they adapted to the use of the church by associating them with some Jewish or Christian holiday. This was done to accommodate the many heathen converting to Christianity when Constantine made Christianity the state religion.

Because the season coincides with the time of the resurrection, the church now celebrates the resurrection at Easter time.

Matthew 16:21 *From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.*

Jesus was preparing his disciples for the terrible days ahead. They had no idea of the crucifixion, much less of the resurrection. Jesus gave them hope at the same time that he warned them of his death.

Matthew 17:23 *And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry. The disciples were greatly troubled with the word about his death. It seems that they must have missed his promise of*

resurrection in three days, because they were sorrowful at the time, and later failed to remember about it.

Acts 2:31 *He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.*

The prophet, David, gave many details about Jesus' life, death and resurrection. This detail is a most unusual one. Though Jesus died, his soul would not stay in hell, or sheol, nor would his body return to dust, as most of ours will.

III. WITNESSES OF THE RESURRECTION

Acts 1:22 *Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.*

The disciples were concerned that one of their number, Judas, had lost his office. They wanted the twelve, to be ordained as witnesses of the resurrection. The twelve tribes were always represented by twelve elders. They were accustomed to that number.

Acts 2:32 *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.*

His resurrection was central to their beliefs and doctrines.

Acts 5:30 *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.*

They pointed the accusing finger unflinchingly at those who were guilty of crucifying Him.

Acts 3:15 *And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.*

A new truth is stated almost every time. He is shown to be the Prince of Life, raised by God, witnessed by his disciples.

Acts 4:33 *And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.*

The testimony of the resurrection was accompanied with the power of God through the Holy Ghost.

Acts 4:2 *Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.*

The doctrine of the resurrection through the power of Jesus was clearly taught.

IV. THE POWER OF THE MESSAGE OF THE RESURRECTION

Romans 1:4 *And declared [to be] the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:*

The resurrection proved his power, his Sonship, and He was endorsed by the Holy Spirit also.

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(Continued from page 5)

Philippians 3:10 *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

Paul had this hope, and longed for its fulfillment. He knew that its fulfillment depended upon his being conformed to the death of Christ.

Acts 4:10 *Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, [even] by him doth this man stand here before you whole.*

Miraculous powers were shown through faith in Christ of whom Peter spoke. It was Jesus of Nazareth; the very same they had crucified; also the same whom God had raised from the dead. Only one person could be so described.

V. HIS RESURRECTION CONFIRMS OUR HOPE

1 Peter 1:3 *Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

A lively hope is a joyous one. It comes through the new birth, and is assured by His resurrection.

Romans 6:5 *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also [in the likeness] of [his] resurrection:*

If we have died to sin, as Christ died for sin, we shall rise again unto life eternal, as his resurrection assures us.

1 Corinthians 6:14 *And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.*

It is the power of God that raised up Christ, and will also raise us up, who are in Him. He was the firstfruits of the resurrection.

2 Corinthians 4:14 *Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present [us] with you.*

We will be presented together unto the Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ, in the resurrection, both the dead in Christ and the living.

Romans 4:24 *But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;*

Romans 4:25 *Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.*

Faith in God, who raised up Jesus Christ, who was delivered up to death for our sins, and was raised for our justification, assures us eternal life.

Acts 17:31 *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by [that] man whom he hath ordained; [whereof] he hath given assurance unto all [men], in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

God has given all judgment over to Christ. He will be

our judge, who was once our saviour, the earnest of which is his resurrection.

VI. HIS RESURRECTION AND VICTORY OVER DEATH

Acts 2:24 *Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.*

The victorious Saviour could not be held by the chains of death. He was raised up by the power of God, himself, being a part of the Godhead. He said: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." John 10: 17-18a.

Acts 10:40 *Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; After three days in the tomb, Jesus was seen of Mary Magdalene in the garden. Mary was reluctant to leave without finding her Lord. Jesus spoke to her, revealing his identity unto her, and sending a message to his disciples as to where they could see him.*

Acts 13:33 *God hath fulfilled the same (promise) unto us their (the fathers') children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.*

God proved the divinity and the Sonship of Jesus by raising him from the dead, as the disciples witnessed.

Romans 6:9 *Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.*

He tasted death once for sin, but will never pay that price again. He has won the victory over sin and death forever.

VII. THE INDWELLING SPIRIT OF RESURRECTION

Romans 7:4 *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, [even] to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*

We were married to sin and death, but the law could not save us. We died to the law through Christ, thus we died to the power of sin over us. Now we must be married to Christ, having died to sin, we may now live in Him.

Romans 8:11 *But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*

If the Spirit of God (the Holy Spirit) dwell (take up residence) in you, then God, who raised up Christ, will also raise you up by the same Spirit He raised up Christ. The three persons of the triune God were all active in the resurrection of Christ, and will also raise you and me.

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BRAND L. JENKINS MEMORIAL EASTER OFFERING FOR MISSIONS

This is the most important missions offering of the year! In the past, it has been used to fund the construction of new classrooms for our schools in Belize, to put a chain link fence for our mission house and school at San Lazaro, to put a new roof on the computer lab and mission office at Sand Hill, and to build and repair mission houses, churches and schools.

This year, the need is for funds to support our general mission work in Belize. In addition, we have been given a long-term challenge to help raise funds for construction of a new church at Sand Hill.

So, what do we get for the money we spend on our Mission in Belize? Your gifts to the general mission fund provide support for:

Salaries (Belize Dollars) (monthly amounts) . . . \$6,500
 Three teachers
 The School Administrator
 Two maintenance workers

Transportation \$1,500
 Includes gas, oil, repairs, insurance, license fees and other travel expenses for all mission personnel (Gasoline is almost ten dollars per gallon in Belize).

Utilities \$1,000
 Water, lights, gas, phones, etc. for two mission houses and the mission office

Maintenance \$750
 Grass cutting, minor repairs,
 Cleaning, etc,

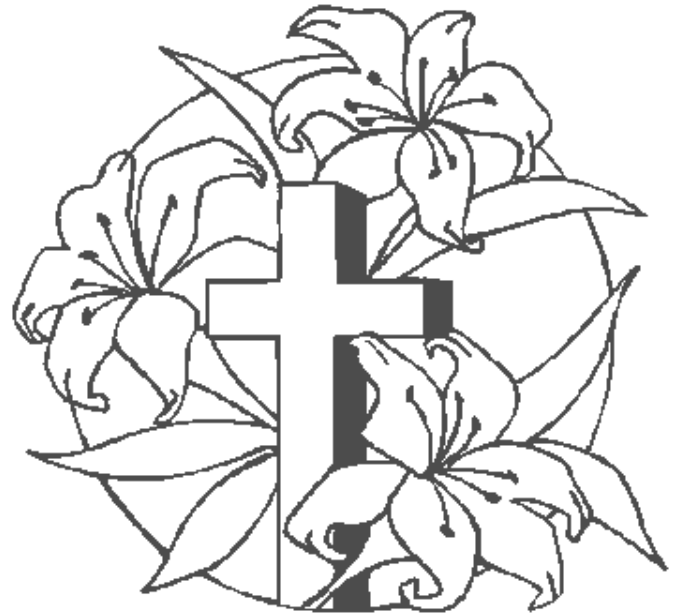
Schools \$300
 School supplies, etc.
 Plus \$4,000 annually for books and instructional material

Office Expense \$150
 Paper, supplies, computer and printer cartridges, etc.

Conference Support \$400

Total (Belize Dollars) Monthly \$10,600
(\$5,300 US Dollars)

Annual Belize Missions Budget \$127,200 (\$63,600 US)
 Salaries and Expenses of Missionaries on the field are not included in these amounts.
 Support for our missionaries comes from shares raised



specifically for that purpose.

The Belize conference consists of seven churches, two in the Creole area and five in the Spanish area, with six pastors (August Pine Ridge is currently without a pastor).

The average Sunday morning attendance at our church in Sand Hill is close to 150.

Rev. Claudio Leal and the people at Sand Hill are counting on our help to build a nice, modern church which will meet their needs for growth in the years to come. They expect to begin work on the new building this year.

The new church building at Progresso should be finished soon. It has an unusual design, but will be very attractive. Funding for this project has come from the Louisiana Conference, but some additional funds will be needed to finish it.

We have two schools, Pancotto School at Sand Hill with some 240 students, and San Lazaro School with about 140 students. There are nineteen government paid teachers

(\$31,197.66 total monthly salaries paid by the government in January) and three mission paid teachers. Our schools are among the top rated schools in Belize. We can be pleased with our efforts there!

Where does your mission money go? Now you know! Does our work in Belize deserve our support? By all means! Please make your Easter offering for missions a matter of prayer, and give as generously as God has blessed you! And remember, Jesus gave his all for you on that first Good Friday. How can we do less than give Him our best?

A Layman's Point Of View -

Larry Davis, General Conference Laymen's President

Our Living Hope

1 Peter 1:3-6

Many families have Easter traditions. Perhaps you have a family dinner or Easter Egg hunt. I hope worship is a regular Easter tradition in your family. I remember as a kid looking for Easter baskets that were generally hidden somewhere in the house. These are fun times and such traditions build cherished memories in our hearts.

The danger of our Easter traditions is that sometimes the traditions overshadow the real message of Easter. We start to think that Easter is about eggs, rabbits, candy, and family gatherings, rather than a celebration of one of the most significant events in human history: the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

The first thing we see is the basis of our living hope. We are given new life in Christ due to HIS mercy. If you were driving a little faster than the signs say that you should drive (though I know none of you would do that) and a highway patrol pulled you over, justice would demand that you be given a speeding ticket. Injustice (the opposite of justice) would be if you were driving the speed limit, and were pulled over and given a ticket. Mercy is being let off with a warning. Mercy is being spared the justice we deserve. We become a child of God not because of our performance, but because of his mercy and grace.

Our Living Hope involves a radical transformation. "In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope." The idea of new birth suggests a new beginning, a fresh start, a radical transformation. I suspect we cannot plummet the full depth of that phrase. However, what we do know is this: it at least means that a true and lasting change takes place in the life of the one who is a child of God.

It's easy to forget this fact. It is easy to think that we became a child of God because we said a certain prayer, or was baptized, or even had an emotional experience. None of those things are true. It is easy to think of eternal life as just something that happens when we die. In truth, it is something that happens the moment we truly turn to Jesus as our Savior and allow God's Spirit to live inside of us.

American Idol is a TV phenomenon. You don't become the next "American Idol" because you go to a tryout. You don't win the competition because of your good intentions or your strong desire to win. Those things are needed, but there are lots of people who do both of those things, but don't get past the first interview. You win the competition, because of your talent. It is because of what is IN you.

In the same way, asking Christ to be your Savior and following God's command to be baptized and to be a part of a church are necessary ingredients to discipleship. But the true believers are the ones who have been transformed by God's mercy. They are people who have been "made new". They have experienced a radical transformation in their hearts.

Our Living Hope is anchored to the Resurrection of Jesus. Peter says we are born into a "living hope". This is not wishful thinking (like, "I hope I win the lottery"); The word "hope" denotes a "sure confidence". The symbol for hope is an anchor, not pixie dust! Our hope is like an anchor that holds us steady in the storm.

The resurrection means that Jesus was Who He said He was. His offer of eternal life is more than those infomercials that peddle home remedies or tell you how to get rich in three easy steps: they sound good, but do not accomplish what they promise. The resurrection shows that our sin CAN be forgiven. We CAN have new life. There IS life beyond the grave. There IS a God who knows we are here and cares about our lives.

The resurrection of Christ offers not only hope in the next life: it offers hope in this life. Pain, fear, frustration, uncertainty, loneliness, and discouragement are all real and debilitating physical and emotional experiences. The reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, through which we have present and eternal hope, is equally real but in no way debilitating. Because of the resurrection we are not helpless, for we have a risen Priest; we are not hopeless, for we hear the risen Prophet; and we are not worthless, for we serve the risen King.

Peter doesn't say life won't be difficult. He says we will have tough times. In fact, he goes on to say that the trials of our lives are the very things that build character and strength in us. The strongest believers are those who have learned to trust Him, even in the storms.

Easter calls us to lift our focus. It challenges us to remember the living hope that is the Anchor for our lives. It is the hope that gives us strength, confidence, and which takes away our fear. Please, don't miss the real message of Easter.

I hope you have been reminded that we celebrate Easter not because of our traditions but because this event in history has changed the world. It has changed us. And it has changed us forever.

The Missionary Record

Mrs. Dianne Reid, Woman Executive Secretary, Editor

HE IS ALIVE FOREVERMORE!

Luke 16

We can only imagine the abject discouragement and fear the Disciples were experiencing on the heels of the Crucifixion. Their loving, powerful and wonderful Master had suffered and died as a person deserving capital punishment. The Son of God was tried illegally by the Jews, brought before the Roman ruler, Pilate, beaten with a whip, slapped, spat upon, cruelly mocked, and then nailed to the Cross. The Disciples were afraid and despondent; they were in hiding. It seemed Satan had won - but the seemingly darkest hour in history was not a defeat, but the glorious victory over sin. Not only was He victorious over sin when He was crucified, but He conquered death by His Resurrection. Death, both spiritual and physical, was the result of man's fall in the Garden. Jesus came to take care of the sin problem in all its aspects. **HE IS ALIVE!**

Early on the third day, we do not see the remaining eleven Disciples arriving at the tomb to properly prepare the body of Jesus, but the women. Mary Magdalene was privileged to see and speak to the Risen Christ first. She did not realize it was Him until he spoke her name, "Mary". Has Jesus called

your name? Have you responded in faith? obedience and joy? **HE IS ALIVE!**

You know, He not only called her name, but He sent her on a mission. He sent her as the first human witness of the Resurrection. She did not hesitate to take the message, however incredible the message would sound to the others. She went to the Disciples' hiding place, as they mourned and wept. She went faithfully and expectantly, bringing them the best news possible. **HE IS ALIVE!**

She was at first rebuffed by the Disciples. Are we willing to share the message even in difficult circumstances? What a great blessing to have walked and talked with Christ as did the Disciples, but the Bible assures us that he who believes, without having seen Him in the flesh, are even more blessed. We see Him now with eyes of faith, not physical sight - but one day soon we will see Him face to face. **HE IS ALIVE!**

In the Resurrection account, we find some rather interesting information as the women were approaching the tomb. They were very anxious, because the stone was very large and heavy, which was evident by the question: "Who'll roll the stone away from the door of the tomb for us?" When they arrived an angel had rolled away the stone. Why is this included in the Scriptures? Perhaps, to demonstrate the glorified Christ was able to come out of the tomb without the stone having to be rolled

away. The angel, apparently, rolled away the stone to let the women in, not to let Christ out, as He had already risen from the grave before the women arrived. The angel told the women: *Don't be afraid: You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified: He is risen; He is not here: see the place where they laid Him. But go your way; tell his disciples and Peter that he goes before you into Galilee...* **HE IS ALIVE!**

Author, Max Lucado, shares the idea (paraphrasing) that, perhaps, we see from the Resurrection account, that just at the right time God removes obstacles of our faith -- if we'll just hang in there. Don't give up on God and His perfect timing, wisdom, and power. As Jesus hung bleeding on the Cross, all seemed lost, but not so, my friends. The Resurrection of Christ tells us that He really was, and is, the Messiah, the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. God the Father validated the Son and His mission by miraculously raising Him from the dead. The rising from the grave was God's "Stamp of Approval". God did not leave His precious Son in the ground. **HE IS ALIVE!**

There are several other points of spiritual importance in this narrative. Jesus died on Friday, but the women came on the first day of week, because they were Jews and had observed their Sabbath the day before. Are we as
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WMS PRAYER CALENDAR

MARCH - Board of Missions; President and Officers of WMS Convention; Branch Officers; Zone Presidents; Auxiliaries Progress; Secretaries of Missionary Education; March Promotional Program;

Brand Memorial Share Plan; Brand L. Jenkins Memorial Easter Offering - Matthew 28:19-20

CALENDAR OF EVENTS: Secretary of Missionary Education: Emphasis should be on Missionary Education, reports from the mission fields and the general mission work. Promote Brand Memorial Share Plan.

Promote Missions Emphasis Month and present March Promotional Program. Study Methodist Protestant Discipline with special emphasis on Chapter 4, Section 8 which pertains to work of the Board of Missions.

Study Constitution and By-laws of Branch and local Auxiliaries. Brand L. Jenkins Memorial Easter Offering.

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faithful to observe the first day of the week, Sunday, the Lord's Day? Is this day special in our hearts as New Testament believers? Actually, each Sunday should be a celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord. **HE IS ALIVE!**

Also, we see angels ministering to the needs of believers, which is a very comforting truth. When the women were frightened on their arrival at the tomb, an angel said, *Don't be afraid...* Many times we are needlessly afraid when confronted with great difficulty. God is still on the throne whatever the circumstance. Perhaps, the most significant lesson to be learned from this account is that the women (and apparently the Disciples) had not fully realized the unlimited divine power of God. May we not lose sight of the fact that God is truly Omnipotent. Another point is that the women arrived very early in the morning to embalm (they thought) the body of Jesus properly. Apparently, this was of great importance to them, because they loved Him. Are our priorities right in seeking and serving the Lord? **HE IS ALIVE!**

Before the Lord ascended He personally told the Disciples: *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.* We have the Truth to share, the Power to carry out the mission – but do we have the Love of God burning brightly in hearts to care enough to do our part in carrying out the Great Commission? How can we possibly accomplish the mission He has given us? Be assured that the Holy Spirit, God's Agent on Earth right now, is our Helper; and remember

**CHRIST
IS ALIVE
FOREVERMORE!**

A Father's Love

After a few of the usual Sunday evening hymns, the church's pastor slowly stood up, walked over to the pulpit and, before he gave his sermon for the evening, he briefly introduced a guest minister who was in the service that evening.

In the introduction, the pastor told the congregation that the guest minister was one of his dearest childhood friends and that he wanted him to have a few moments to greet the church and share whatever he felt would be appropriate for the service.

With that, an elderly man stepped up to the pulpit and began to speak.

'A father, his son, and a friend of his son were sailing off the Pacific Coast,' he began 'when a fast approaching storm blocked any attempt to get back to shore. The waves were so high, that even though the father was an experienced sailor, he could not keep the boat upright and the three were swept into the ocean as the boat capsized!'

The old man hesitated for a moment, making eye contact with two teenagers who were, for the first time since the service began, looking somewhat interested in his story.

The aged minister continued with his story, 'grabbing a rescue line, the father had to make the most excruciating decision of his life: to which boy would he throw the other end of the life line, he only had seconds to make the decision. The father knew that his son was a Christian and he also knew that his son's friend was not, the agony of his decision could not be matched by the torrent of waves!'

'As the father yelled out, "I LOVE YOU, SON!" he threw out the life line to his son's friend. By the time the father had pulled the friend back to the capsized boat, his son had disappeared beneath the raging swells into

the black of night. His body was never recovered!'

By this time, the two teenagers were sitting up straight in the pew, anxiously waiting for the next words to come out of the old minister's mouth. 'The father', he continued, 'knew his son would step into eternity with Jesus and he could not bear the thought of his son's friend stepping into an eternity without Jesus... Therefore, he sacrificed his son to save the son's friend.'

'How great is the love of God that he should do the same for us. Our heavenly Father sacrificed His only begotten son that we could be saved. I urge you to accept His offer to rescue you and take a hold of the life line He is throwing out to you in this service!'

With that, the old man turned and sat back down in his chair as silence filled the room. The pastor again walked slowly to the pulpit and delivered a brief sermon with an invitation at the end. However, no one responded to the appeal.

Within minutes after the service ended, the two teenagers were at the old man's side.

'That was a nice story', politely stated one of them, 'but I don't think it was very realistic for a father to give up his only son's life in hopes that the other boy would become a Christian!'

'Well, you've got a point there', the old man replied, glancing down at his worn Bible. A big smile broadened his narrow face. He once again looked up at the boys and said, 'it sure isn't very realistic, is it? But, I'm standing here today to tell you that story gives me a glimpse of what it must have been like for God to give up His son for me. You see... **I WAS THAT FATHER, AND YOUR PASTOR IS MY SON'S FRIEND!**'

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Was it to confirm Jesus' commitment to His heavenly Father? It was not for Christ's sake that it happened. The Bible summarizes it as ***He was trans-figured before them.*** Truly it was for the benefit of the disciples. They were to be the future leaders, and they needed to understand Christ's superiority, even over death.

At the time of the transfiguration, the disciples were viewing Christ in a different "light" than ever before. During the ministry of Christ, He was a Man of compassion: for the hurting, the poor, the sinner, and the struggling faithful one. Now the disciples were seeing how the Father viewed the Son. There was three phases of Christ's ministry: (1) resisting every temptation, (2) bursting into sudden glory, (3) the glory fading as Christ, with a straight course headed to the cross. We might picture Jesus much like a flower: beginning in weakness, growing into full strength, suddenly bursting into floral beauty, then fading to death to produce more flowers. Jesus Christ compared his death to a grain of wheat, that unless the grain falls to the ground and dies, it will remain alone, but if it dies it shall produce much wheat. The three disciples were viewing the glory of His unseen power. Habakkuk 3:4 - *There was the hiding of His power.* The body/flesh of Christ kept the glory veiled until the chosen time. II Peter 1:16 declared that the three disciples *were eye witnesses of His majesty.* The glory that the eyewitnesses saw was the splendor of the inner Person. The light shining that made His garments white as the light, and His face as the sun, was the radiance of the inner Person.

(To be continued next issue.)

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VIII. THE CHRISTIAN'S CONFESSION OF THE RESURRECTION

Romans 10:9 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

Belief in the resurrection is critical to our salvation. This verse contains a condition and a promise. If we confess faith in Christ, and believe sincerely that God raised him from the dead, then we shall be saved.

IX. THE RESURRECTION POWER OF GOD

Ephesians 1:19 *And what [is] the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,*

Ephesians 1:20 *Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set [him] at his own right hand in the heavenly [places],*

1Peter 1:21 *Who by him do believe*

in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

God's power toward us of salvation and resurrection is demonstrated in Christ Jesus, whom He raised from the dead, and exalted to His right hand of power on high.

1Thessalonians 1:10 *And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, [even] Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*

God is waiting to send Jesus to gather his saints from the earth. No one knows when He will appear. Our shouts of victory will ring through the heavens, because we know that we have been delivered from death, and the judgment of wrath. His wrath awaits the wicked left upon this earth, and those who await judgment in death, hell, and the grave.

I want to be in Him then, don't you?

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Church News

Youth Shine in Bible Quiz Competition

Grove Hill Methodist Protestant Church hosted the Alabama Conference Bible Quiz Competition Saturday, February 9, 2008 and served a delicious meal to those who attended.

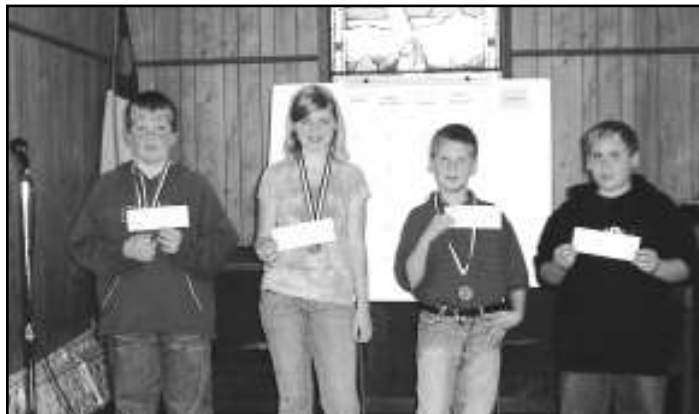
Styled somewhat after the format of the TV game show Jeopardy, there were six categories of questions: Geography, Numbers, People – Who Did It, People – Who Said It, Miracles, and Key Scriptures. All 146 questions (and answers) were based on the Gospel of John. A young person could choose a category of questions ranging from easy to difficult, with a point range from 10 to 50. In the second and third round, there was also a hidden bonus question worth 60 and 120 points. After the question was read, the pressure was on to see who would buzz in first and give the correct answer. Contestants ranged in age from 7 to 16.

In each division the 1st Place winner received a gold medallion and a check for \$100. The 2nd Place winner received a silver medallion and a check for \$75. The 3rd Place winner received a bronze medallion and a check for \$50. The 4th Place winner received a check for \$25.

A lock-in is planned for Friday, April 4 at Playland Bowling Alley in Selma, AL from 1:30 A.M. until 5:30 A.M.

*Martha Headley, Secretary,
Council of Religious Education*

And the winners were. . .



JR. DIVISION: 1st Place - Adam Hamilton, Pleasant Grove; 2nd Place - Katelyn Crawford, Springfield; 3rd Place - Austin Grayson, Grove Hill; 4th Place - Matt Ellison, Pleasant Grove



SR. DIVISION: 1st Place - Caleb Lynn, Grove Hill; 2nd Place - Tanner Blevins, Grove Hill; 3rd Place - Brittany Headley, Pleasant Grove; 4th Place - Jodie Cotney, Pleasant Grove

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